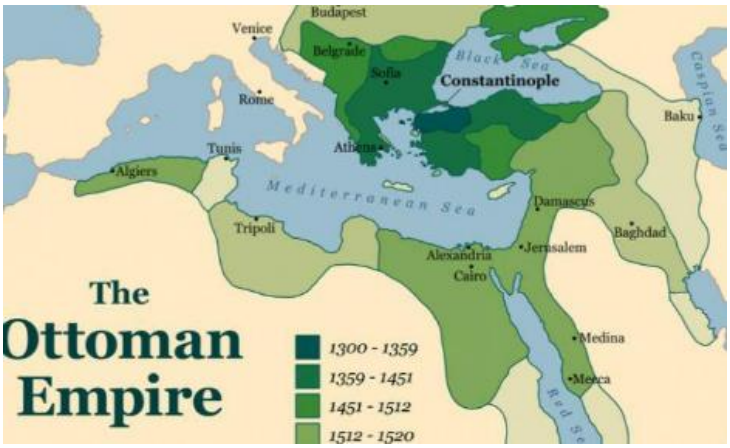
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (1916-1993)

(i) Post-War Conflict in Palestine After World War I (till the Formation of the State of Israel)

Aims of Arab Nationalism and Zionism:

- **Arab Nationalism:**
  - **Arabs sought independence from the Ottoman Empire and hoped to establish unified Arab states in the Middle East.**
  - **They envisioned a Pan-Arab identity, but the region was largely divided by colonial powers.**



- **Zionism:**
- A movement for (originally) the re-establishment and (now) the development and protection of a Jewish nation in what is now Israel. It was established as a political organization in 1897 under Theodor Herzl, and was later led by Chaim Weizmann
  - **A nationalist movement aiming to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine.**
  - **Led by figures such as Theodor Herzl, Zionism gained momentum in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, especially in response to rising anti-Semitism in Europe.**

Impact of World War I: Conflicting Promises Made by the British:

- **Husain-MacMahon Correspondence (1915-1916):**
  - **The British promised Sharif Husain of Mecca to support the independence of Arabs if they helped fight the Ottoman Empire.**
  - **This led to Arab revolts against Ottoman rule.**

- **Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916):**
- **The Sykes-Picot Agreement was a secret treaty between Great Britain and France in 1916 that divided the Ottoman Empire after World War I. The agreement was named after the chief negotiators, Sir Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot.**
  - **A secret agreement between Britain and France that divided the Ottoman territories into spheres of influence.**
  - **The agreement contradicted British promises to the Arabs, particularly regarding their desire for independence.**
  - **The agreement divided Turkish- held Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine**
  - **France would take control of Lebanon and indirect control of Syria**
  - **Britain would control Iraq and the Persian Gulf**
  - **Palestine would be under international control**

- **Balfour Declaration (1917):**
  - **The British government declared its support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.**

- **This was seen as a major step in the Zionist cause but was met with resistance from the Arab population of Palestine, who feared displacement.**
- **The declaration was written by Arthur Balfour, the British foreign minister.**
- **It was inspired by Zionism, the ideology that Jewish people should settle in Palestine.**
- **The declaration was biased and dismissive of the rights of the Palestinian people.**
- **It laid the groundwork for the displacement of Palestinians and the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.**
- **The declaration was taken as justification for the establishment of Israel in 1948.**

(ii) The Arab-Israeli Wars (1948-1979)

First Arab-Israeli War (1948-1949):

- **Causes:**
  - **The conflict began after the United Nations proposed partitioning Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab states, with Jerusalem as an international city.**
  - **The Jewish community accepted the UN plan, but the Arab states rejected it, and war broke out after the declaration of the State of Israel in May 1948.**
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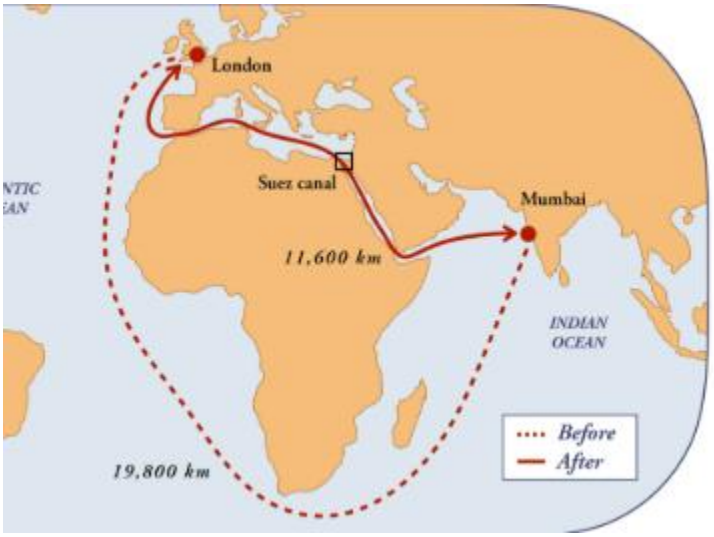
- **Results:**
  - **Israel emerged victorious, and the Arab states (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq) were defeated.**

- Israel gained more territory than originally proposed by the UN partition plan.
- Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs became refugees, and the conflict led to a long-standing refugee problem.



Suez Crisis (1956):

- **Causes:**
  - Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, a critical shipping route, angering Britain and France, who had economic and strategic interests in the canal.
  - Israel, concerned about Egyptian blockades of Israeli shipping, joined Britain and France in an attack on Egypt.
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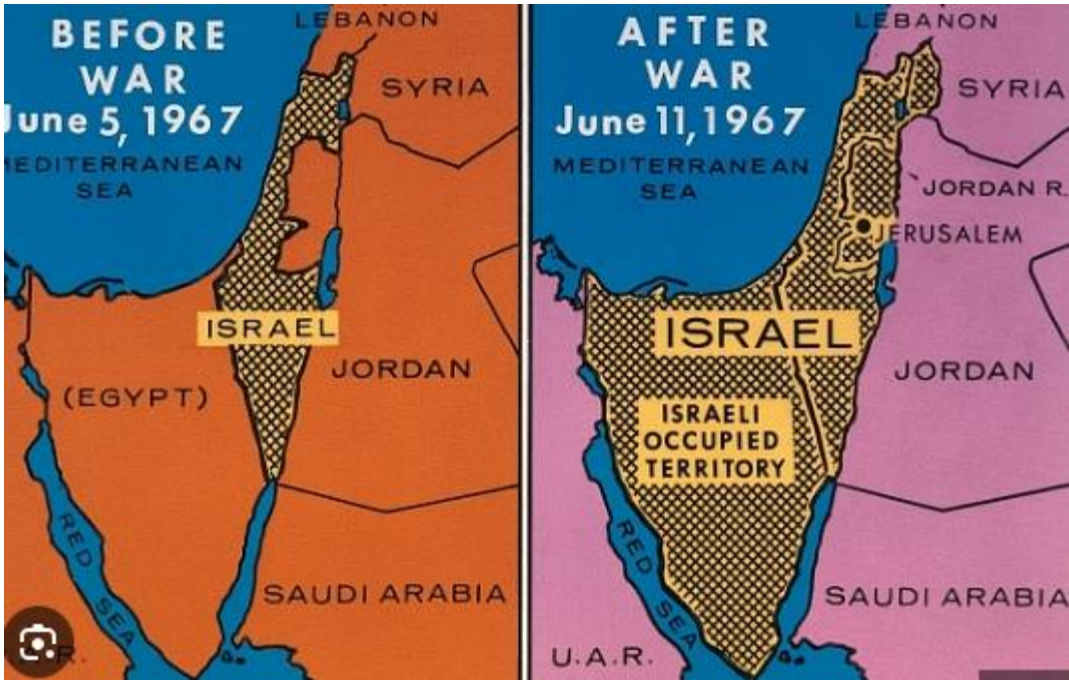
- **Results:**
  - Despite military success, Israel, Britain, and France were forced to stop fighting due to pressure from the U.S. and the Soviet Union.
  - Nasser emerged as a hero in the Arab world, while Israel gained some security along its border with Egypt.

Six-Day War (1967):

Six-Day War, brief war that took place June 5–10, 1967, and was the third of the Arab-Israeli wars.

Causes:



- **Rising tensions between Israel and its Arab neighbors (Egypt, Syria, Jordan) due to disputes over water rights, border clashes, and the presence of Egyptian troops in the Sinai Peninsula.**
- **The Arab states initiated a military buildup, and Israel launched a preemptive strike to defend itself.**

- ## Results:
  - **Israel decisively defeated the Arab states and captured East Jerusalem, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights.**
  - **This created a massive shift in the territorial balance, with Israel controlling significant Arab lands.**
  - **The war significantly altered the dynamics of the Middle East conflict, and the issue of Palestinian territories became even more prominent.**

Yom Kippur War (1973):

- **Causes:**
- **The Yom Kippur War, also known as the Ramadan War, the October War, the 1973 Arab–Israeli War, or the Fourth Arab–Israeli War, was fought from 6 to 25 October 1973 between Israel and a coalition of Arab states led by Egypt and Syria.**
    - **Egypt and Syria, under Anwar Sadat and Hafez al-Assad, launched a surprise attack on Israel during the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, hoping to regain the territories lost in 1967 (Sinai and Golan Heights).**
- **Results:**
    - **After initial setbacks, Israel counterattacked and regained the upper hand.**
    - **The war ended in a ceasefire, and both sides suffered heavy casualties.**
    - **The war shifted the regional dynamics, paving the way for peace talks between Egypt and Israel.**

Sadat and the Camp David Accords (1979):

- **Background:**
    - **After the Yom Kippur War, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat recognized the need for peace with Israel.**
- **Camp David Accords (1978):**
    - **Facilitated by U.S. President Jimmy Carter, the accords led to a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel.**
    - **Israel agreed to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula, and Egypt became the first Arab country to recognize Israel.**

- Sadat received the Nobel Peace Prize, but the agreement was controversial in the Arab world.

Formation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO):

- **Formation (1964):** The PLO was created to represent the Palestinian people and advocate for their right to self-determination.
  - Initially led by Ahmed Shukeiri, the PLO later became dominated by Yasser Arafat and adopted more militant tactics.
  - The PLO was recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people by the Arab League.

(iii) Oslo Peace Accords (1993)

Intifada and Change in Attitudes:

- First Intifada (1987-1993): A Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation, primarily in the West Bank and Gaza, which led to growing international awareness of the Palestinian cause.
- By the early 1990s, both Israel and the Palestinian leadership (under Yasser Arafat and the PLO) recognized the need for peace.

Oslo Peace Accords (1993):

- **Main Features:**
  - **Signed in 1993 between Israel (represented by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin) and the Palestinian Authority (represented by Yasser Arafat).**

  - **Israel agreed to recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people and grant limited self-rule to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.**
  - **The accords laid the groundwork for future negotiations on the final status of key issues like Jerusalem, refugees, and borders.**

. Why it Failed to Bring Peace:

- **While the accords represented a major breakthrough, the peace process faced many challenges:**
  - **Continued violence from both Israeli settlers and Palestinian militants.**
  - **Disagreements on Jerusalem, the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and the borders of a future Palestinian state.**
  - **The assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (1995) by an Israeli extremist undermined efforts for peace.**
  - **The rise of political extremism on both sides contributed to the failure of the peace process.**

Impact of the Conflict:

- **The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains unresolved, with continued disputes over territory, security, and the rights of refugees.**
- **Despite efforts for peace, violence and mistrust persist between Israel and Palestine, and broader regional and international dynamics continue to influence the conflict.**